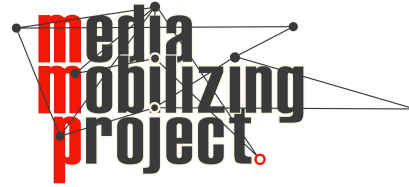


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Movements begin with the telling of untold stories...

Last year, Congress passed the Local Community Radio Act, directing the FCC to expand community radio across the United States. But in cities like Philadelphia, there is simply no room for new Low Power FM (LPFM) community radio stations under the current FCC rules. Now more than ever, we need space for independent community news and voices to be heard.

Philadelphia is a city where 25% of families live below the poverty line and 41% of families can't access the Internet at home, leaving those most in need cut out off from news and information they need. Philadelphia's major newspapers are struggling to stay solvent even after drastically reducing their reporting staff over decades, and after changing ownership 4 times in the last 6 years. On the radio dial, the only station where community members can broadcast is WPEB 88.1 FM, a station licensed to the non-profit Scribe Video Center and governed by a community board of managers that currently broadcasts at 1 watt, reaching only a tiny section of the city's many neighborhoods.

With a low power FM radio station 100 times more powerful than WPEB, the entire city of Philadelphia would have access to an open community forum on the airwaves. With a community radio station, a wide diversity of community members who currently have few opportunities to hear stories relevant to their everyday lives would be able to hear music, stories, and news produced by local leaders, and in their native languages. Students interested in broadcasting would be able to learn hands-on production skills in an open community radio lab, and independent musicians and artists would have an invaluable outlet to share their work with their neighbors.

Philadelphia has a long history of organizing for community media access – a coalition of hundreds worked for over two decades to secure a public access television station, PhillyCAM. Because of their work, community organizations working to produce media for Philadelphia communities can access PhillyCAM to learn to make and distribute content. But many Philadelphians don't have access to cable television. With a community radio station, diverse community broadcasters could reach millions of potential listeners with a more affordable and flexible medium.

Fortunately, with the Local Community Radio Act, Congress authorized the FCC to grant special waivers allowing LPFM stations in more locations, as long as these stations don't cause interference to neighboring stations. These second adjacent frequency waivers would permit LPFM stations to use the same engineering standards that other FM radio services have used for years – standards proven to protect stations from any undue interference.

Using these modern engineering rules would open up hundreds of channels for community radio across the country, including, potentially, in cities like Philadelphia, which very much needs a community voice. But incumbent broadcasters are trying to keep communities off the dial, demanding that LPFM stations play by different rules than their own stations enjoy.

Please give community radio a chance to thrive. As long as new stations won't cause interference, all LPFM applicants should be able to use second adjacent frequency waivers.

MORE

Respectfully Submitted,

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SEIU Healthcare PA
1500 N. 2nd Street
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UNITE HERE Local 274
421 N. 7th Street, Suite 400
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Scribe Video Center
4212 Chestnut Street
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WPEB 88.1 FM
541 B South 52nd Street
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Philadelphia Student Union

PhillyCAM
699 Ranstead Street
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